



Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Document

Atlantic/Central Base Expansion Project

SEPA Determination of Significance (DS) and Request for Comments on the Scope
of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

King County Metro Transit proposes to expand the Atlantic and Central bus bases so the transit system can accommodate more riders and provide more bus service.

Metro needs to determine the scope of the EIS by identifying reasonable alternatives and possible significant adverse impacts.

Inside:

- ✓ Project descriptions
- ✓ Alternatives
- ✓ Site maps
- ✓ Construction phasing
- ✓ How to comment

**Come to a meeting —
see Page 9.**

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Environmental Compliance
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Description of the Proposal

King County Metro Transit proposes to expand the Atlantic and Central bus base complex. The proposed project is part of a long-range strategic plan to expand bus base capacity in the east, central and south areas of King County. Additional capacity to maintain and operate buses is key to the ability of King County to provide transit services — including both Metro Transit service and ST Express service that Sound Transit has contracted with King County to provide. These transit services are an important part of the transportation system needed to support the regional economy and planned growth.

The Atlantic and Central bases are an important part of Metro's base capacity because of their central location. Forty routes are dispatched from these bases daily. All of Metro's electric trolley buses are assigned to Atlantic Base; all of Metro's all-night (or night owl) service is dispatched from Central Base. Since they are so close to each other, the facilities are sometimes referred to as Atlantic/Central. Metro is proposing to expand the capacity of the Atlantic/Central facility to meet the growing demand for bus service in the greater Seattle area.

As the public agency proposing the base expansion plan, Metro has determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to identify and describe the alternatives and potential impacts of the proposal. The EIS will be prepared in accordance with the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), Revised Code of Washington RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). The proposal may also include use of federal funds. Before committing federal funds, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is required to undertake environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To satisfy both NEPA and SEPA, a NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) and SEPA EIS will be prepared and combined as one document.

Location of the Proposal

The existing Atlantic/Central Bus Base and proposed expansion areas under consideration are located between the E-3 busway (Fifth Avenue South) and Airport Way South and between South Royal Brougham Way and South Holgate Street in the North Duwamish Industrial District south of downtown Seattle (see Figure 1, Vicinity Map).

Proponent

King County Metro Transit

Lead Agencies

- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):** U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA).
- **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA):** King County Metro Transit for the SEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA)

Under the procedures adopted by FTA, an EA is required for compliance under NEPA U.S. Department of Transportation Circular, UMTA (FTA) 5620.1.

SEPA Environmental Impact Statement Required

King County Metro Transit, as the SEPA lead agency, has determined that the proposed project may have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An EIS is

required and will be prepared under RCW 43.21C030(2)(c).

King County Metro Transit has identified the following alternatives and subject areas for discussion in the EA/EIS:

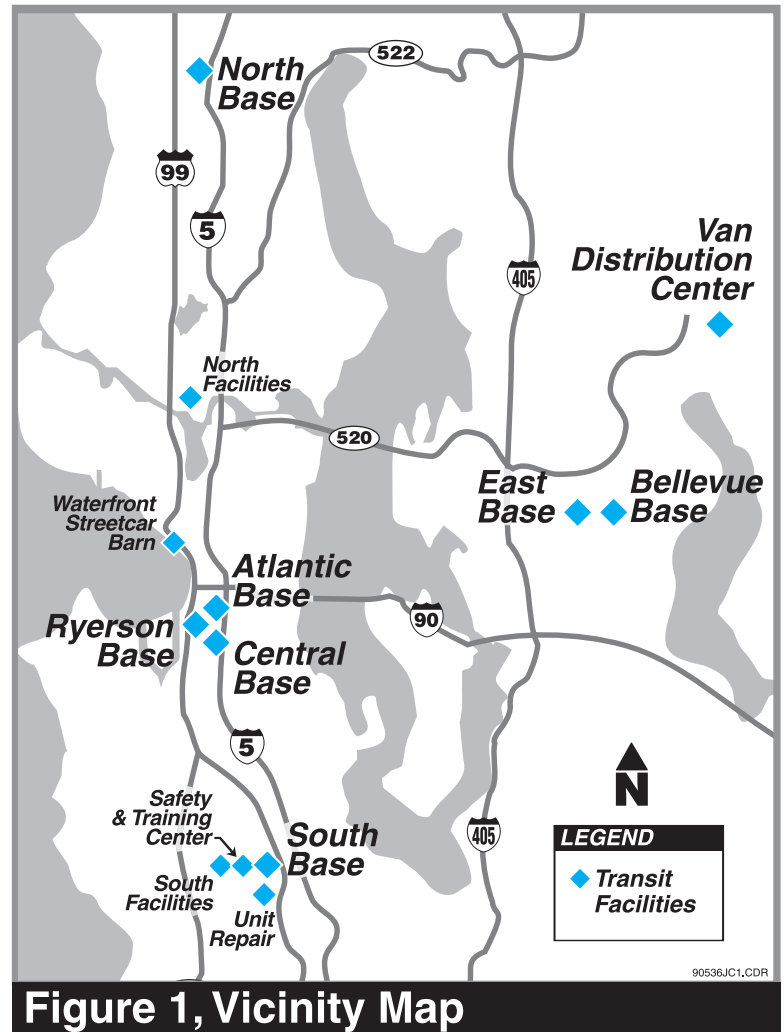
The EIS will include evaluation of a no-build alternative (Alternative A) and two build alternatives (alternatives B and C). Alternative A would not expand bus capacity. Alternative B would expand bus capacity. Alternative C would expand bus capacity and provide for shared facilities with Sound Transit. The additional capacity is needed to provide the flexibility to accommodate planned growth in transit services in King County (both King County Metro service and ST Express service). If determined to be feasible, joint-use options may be included in alternatives B and C. The joint-use concept under evaluation would consist of creating high-bay industrial space in the ground floor of proposed employee parking structures and leasing this space to other industrial users (i.e., private-sector industrial businesses).

Elements of the environment that could have construction and operation impacts include

- Water quality
- Toxic contamination and hazardous waste
- Transportation (including industrial trucking and rail traffic)
- Air quality (including potential project air-quality conformity)
- Noise
- Land-use impacts on industrial businesses
- Consistency with land-use and transportation plans and policies
- Displacements and relocations
- Environmental justice
- Economics
- Cultural and historic resources (including impacts on Sixth Avenue South Historic District).

Other environmental review requirements that will be incorporated include

- National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106
- Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966
- Endangered Species Act, Section 7.



Alternative A – No-Build

Under Alternative A, expansion of the existing bus base would not occur. Without capacity, King County Metro Transit could not operate new or expanded transit services. Implementation of the new Six-Year Transit Development Plan would be in jeopardy. Metro could not honor the contract with Sound Transit for regional express bus services.

Alternative B – Bus Base Expansion

The proposed bus base expansion under Alternative B is shown in Figure 2. Alternative B would add the capacity to maintain, park and operate about 385 buses in three phases over 25 years. The following improvements would be constructed under Alternative B:

- Increased bus parking
- Additional repair and inspection bays
- Body repair, paint, and upholstery shops
- Tire shop and other specialty bays
- Remodel of existing building and expansion of electronics shop
- New operations building (including some support functions)
- Remodeled building for support functions (Transit Police, service supervisors, etc.)
- Replacement of employee parking area
- Parking for base cars (including Transit Police)
- Bus layover capacity on Sixth Avenue South and bus layover capacity on-site during peak hours
- Functions not directly related to base activities (such as information distribution warehouse and work center for facilities maintenance) moved to another location
- Additional fuel/wash bay (optional)
- Joint-use industrial space, if determined to be feasible.

Alternative C – Bus Base Expansion with Sound Transit Light-Rail Transit Maintenance Facility Adjacent to the South

The proposed expansion plan under Alternative C is shown in Figure 3. Alternative C would include all of the improvements described under Alternative B except that the layover capacity on Sixth Avenue South would be entirely on-site. Alternative C assumes Sound Transit elects to proceed with a rail maintenance base south of the Atlantic/Central Bus Base between South Massachusetts Street and South Holgate Street.

To accommodate needs specific to a light-rail maintenance base, Sound Transit's facility would require vacation of Sixth Avenue South between South Massachusetts Street and South Holgate Street. Since Metro could not expand south of South Massachusetts, accommodating Metro's base expansion needs would require continuing the vacation of Sixth Avenue South from South Massachusetts Street to South Royal Brougham Way. The Sound Transit facility would be a separate project and is being planned and analyzed in a separate NEPA/SEPA document by Sound Transit. If Sound Transit does not choose to pursue this alternative, Alternative C will be dropped from consideration by Metro Transit. Alternative C could include some shared facilities on the Sound Transit site, such as employee parking, control center and fueling for general service vehicles.

Alternatives Considered but not Pursued for Further Study in the EIS

In order to identify alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS, King County Metro Transit undertook an extensive process to identify candidate alternatives. The following alternatives were considered but are not pursued for further study in the EIS because they do not meet the project objectives or are otherwise seriously flawed. The EIS will document studies prepared by King County Metro Transit and provide further detail regarding these alternatives.

- **Build capacity elsewhere in King County:** Compared poorly to options that included central capacity because of the higher operating costs of a new base versus an expanded base and increased out-of-service (deadhead) costs for buses traveling between the base and bus routes.
- **Build capacity elsewhere in the north Duwamish industrial area:** Would result in higher operating and capital costs and would require up to twice as much land compared to expanding the footprint of the existing base.
- **Structured bus parking:** Eliminated because of estimated high capital and operating costs; substantial disruption during construction (pushing trolleys between maintenance facility and yard 24 hours a day); and inability to meet program requirements (accommodating repair of trolley propulsion systems).
- **Complete avoidance of Sixth Avenue South Industrial Historic District:** This alternative considered site plans that would completely avoid use of the Sixth Avenue South Industrial Historic District. The alternative was eliminated because not using this district either required structured bus parking (see above) or was not able to meet project objectives.
- **Use historic district buildings:** Eliminated because the existing historic district buildings were determined to be unsuitable for base functions.
- **Expand to minimize impact on Historic District:** This option included expanding bus parking adjacent to the Atlantic yard and expanding to the south of the base rather than west as shown in Alternative B. This alternative was eliminated because of potential impacts on other industrial land. (It would require relocating two port-related businesses and removing a medium-size parcel with rail access from the industrial district.) The City of Seattle would be unlikely to issue a conditional-use permit for expansion of the base capacity into prime industrial property (large tracts with rail access).
- **Build a joint facility with Sound Transit:** This option included building structured bus parking above light rail vehicle storage space. The option was not pursued because of capital and operational costs. The option also did not reduce the use of industrial land compared to Alternative C. The primary land-use difference from Alternative C is that Sixth Avenue South remained open.

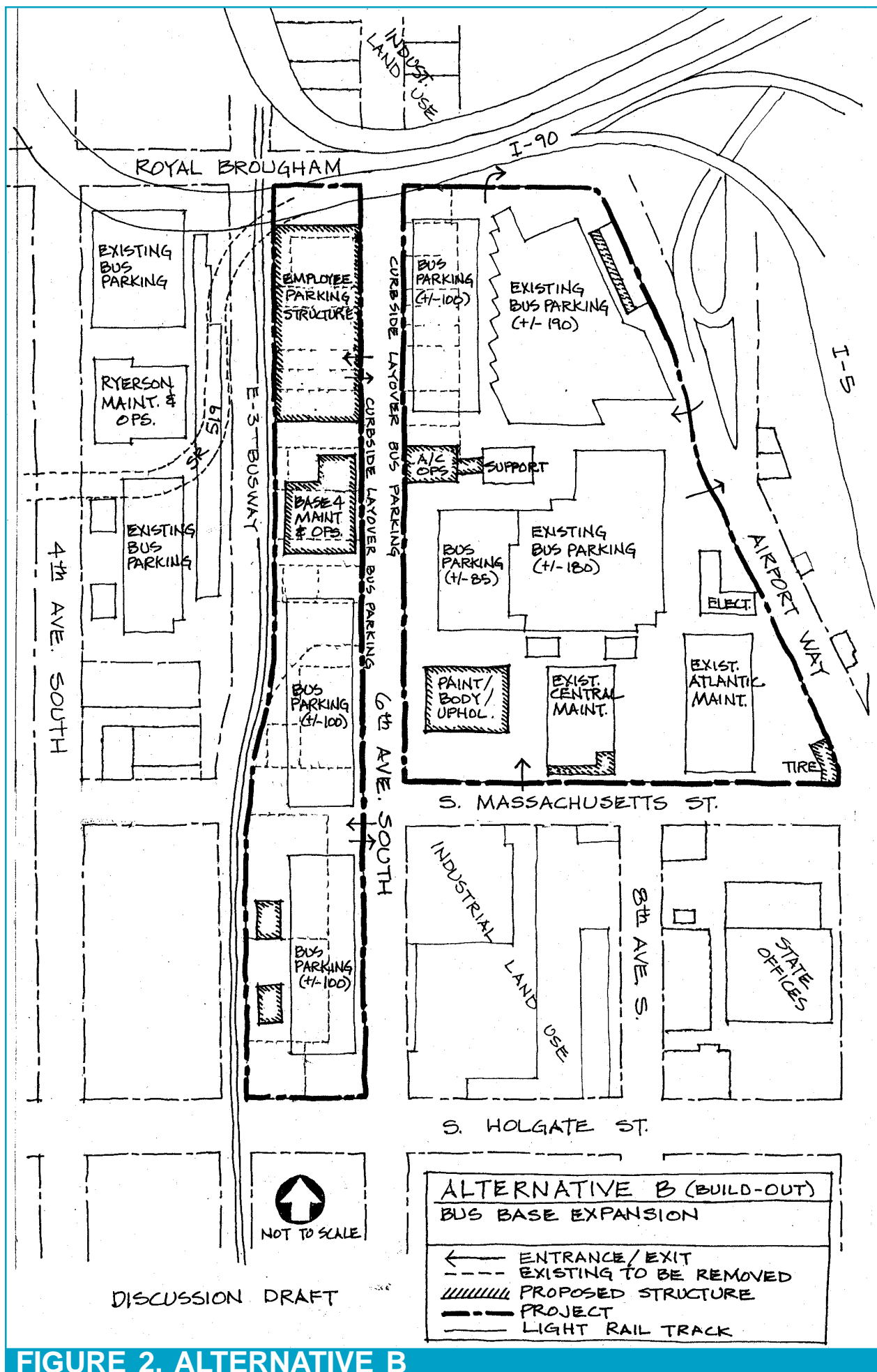


FIGURE 2, ALTERNATIVE B

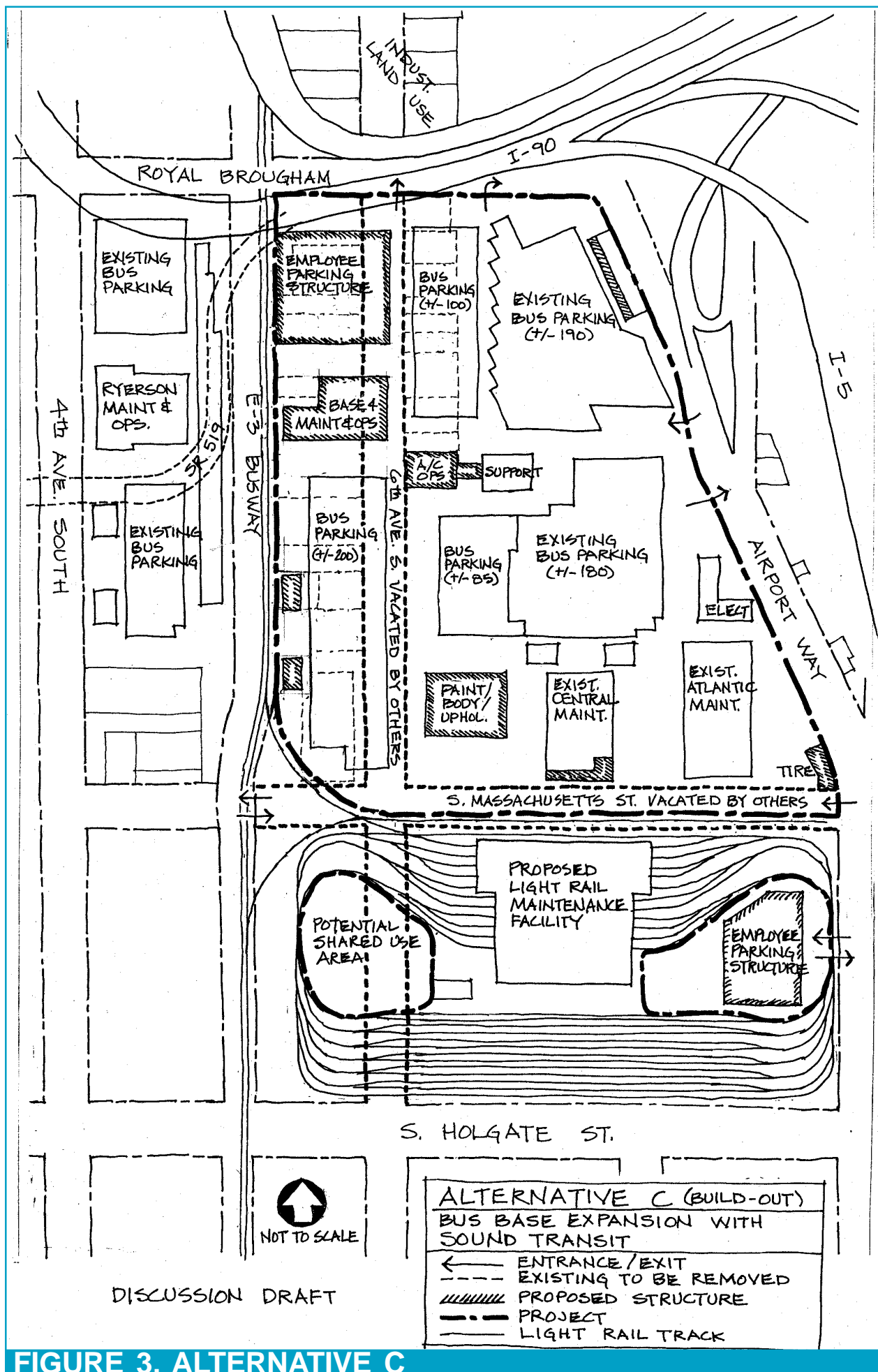


FIGURE 3, ALTERNATIVE C

Proposed Construction Phasing

King County Metro Transit proposes to build the project in three phases over a period of 20 to 25 years. Phase III is a long-term vision of the full build-out of bus-base capacity for the complex.

Phase	Planned Capacity	Construction Period*
Phase I	± 100 buses	2002 through 2006
Phase II	± 85 buses	2007 through 2009
Phase III	± 200 buses	2020 through 2025

**Actual timing may vary depending on forecast*

The following improvements would be constructed under Phase I (capacity available 2005):

- Construct approximately 100 bus parking spaces.
- Convert bus bays used by specialized functions to maintenance bays.
- Reallocate spaces in maintenance buildings to accommodate maintenance functions (oxygen and acetylene storage, storage, office spaces).
- Remodel existing building for electronic repairs.
- Construct new tire, body repair and paint shops.
- Install additional specialty bays (steam clean, etc.).
- Remodel interior spaces in existing maintenance buildings to accommodate maintenance bays.
- Construct new operations (driver) building.
- Remodel existing operations building for support functions (including Transit Police).
- Stage employee parking, construction staging and temporary relocation space for base functions west of Sixth Avenue South.
- Potentially locate bus layover spaces on base during peak hours (when most buses are on the road) and adjacent to the base at other hours as needed.
- Construct additional fuel/wash lane (optional).

The following improvements would be constructed under Phase II (capacity available 2009):

- Construct approximately 85 bus parking spaces.
- Build four maintenance bays at south end of existing maintenance building (could be either pits or hoist bays).
- Provide employee parking and construction staging area west of Sixth Avenue South.

The following improvements would be constructed under Phase III (capacity available between 2022-2025):

- Construct approximately 200 bus parking spaces.
- Complete construction of a new base including maintenance bays, specialty bays, operations facilities, fuel and wash buildings, and bus parking on west side of Sixth Avenue South.
- Build employee-parking garage to handle existing capacity and capacity added in Phases I through III.
- Investigate joint-use of industrial space at ground level of structured parking garage (optional).

Anticipated Permits and Approvals

- Master Use Permit
- Building Permit(s)
- Demolition Permit
- Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency “Notification of Demolition”
- Drainage/Grading Permit
- Street Vacations
- Private Contract Permit “Major Public Improvements”
- Street Use Permits
- Side Sewer Permits
- National Pollution Discharge Elimination Stormwater General Permit

Schedule Information

EIS Scoping Period	July-August 1999
Draft Environmental Impact Statement	Late spring 2000
Final Environmental Impact Statement	Winter 2000
Property Acquisition/Business Relocation	2001 through 2002
Predesign/final Design	2000 through 2003
Construction (sequenced)	2002 through 2006

Scoping

The first step in the scoping process is to determine the scope of the EIS by identifying reasonable alternatives and probable significant adverse impacts. Agencies, affected tribes and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EA/EIS, including alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Oral and written comments will be accepted at the Open House/Scoping Meeting.

Open House/Scoping Meeting

Date: Thursday, Aug. 12, 1999

Time: 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m

Place: Mezza Restaurant meeting room, 2401 Utah Ave. S., Seattle (in SODO Center near First Avenue South and South Lander Street).

To arrange meeting accommodations for people with disabilities, please contact Barbara de Michele, community relations planner: (206) 263-3762 (voice); (206) 684-1682 (TTY); (206) 263-3489 (fax); barbara.demichelle@metrokc.gov (e-mail).

previous page for meeting information).

- Submit a comment letter (postmarked by Aug. 26, 1999) or fax (206) 684-1900 to the SEPA Responsible Official, Rick Walsh, General Manager, King County Metro Transit, c/o Paul Leland, 201 S. Jackson St., M.S. KSC-TR-0431, Seattle, WA 98104-3856.
- Submit comments using scoping comment sheet at end of this document. A postage-paid sheet is attached for your convenience.
- Submit scoping comments electronically using the SEPA comment form available at the project Internet address: <http://www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/basepgm/achome.htm>. You will receive a reply acknowledging receipt of your comments. If you do not receive a reply, please call (206) 684-1168.

Upcoming Process

In addition to the scoping meeting, comments will be solicited in response to the Draft EIS after it is issued. A public open house will also be held during the 30-day Draft EIS review period. To receive all future mailings regarding the proposal:

- Provide your name and address on the scoping meeting attendance sheet
- Provide your name and address on a scoping comment sheet (either paper or electronic copy).

To be added to the project mailing list:

- Check the box on the electronic or paper comment sheet or on the scoping meeting attendance sheet
- Specify in your comment letter that you wish to be put on the mailing list
- Call the Community Relations Hot Line, (206) 684-1846.

More information on the project is available on the Internet at <http://www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/basepgm/achome.htm>.

SEPA Responsible Official

Rick Walsh, General Manager, King County Metro Transit

Environmental Review Contact

For questions or more information on the environmental review process, please contact Paul Leland:

- Mail: Environmental Compliance, King County Metro Transit, King Street Center, 201 S. Jackson Street, M.S. KSC-TR-0431, Seattle, WA 98104-3856
- Phone: (206) 684-1168 (voice) or (206) 684-1682 (TTY)
- Fax: (206) 684-1900
- E-Mail: paul.leland@metrokc.gov.

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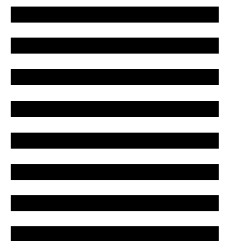
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201 S JACKSON ST
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Comments

Scoping comments are intended to facilitate preparation of an environmental impact statement that focuses on meaningful project alternatives, all potentially significant environmental impacts and possible measures that could be used to reduce potential impacts. Scoping comments should address the adequacy of the proposed scope of the EIS, including suggesting other meaningful project alternatives or significant impacts that may have been overlooked. Comments are due by Aug. 26, 1999.

1. Please comment on the project alternatives identified, including both those proposed to be carried forward for consideration and those considered but rejected as not meeting project objectives or as otherwise flawed.

2. Please comment on the range of environmental impacts proposed to be discussed in the EIS.

3. Please provide any other comments you may have regarding the proposed scope of the EIS.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail address _____

Signature _____

☐ Check here if you would like your name added to our mailing list.